

MAR 22 2007

REMARKS

A response was filed in the present application on December 26, 2006 in which the claims were amended and arguments were presented in response to the Official Action issued on August 25, 2006. After noticing errors on the claim amendments, a Supplemental Response was later filed on January 29, 2007, supplementing the previous response. The Supplemental Response, is clearly marked (in bold and capital letters) a "Supplemental" Response and further clearly and expressly indicates that the same "supplements the response filed on December 26, 2006" (see page 1 of the Supplemental Response) and the amendments contained therein "supplement the previous amendment" to correct the errors (see page 6 of the Supplemental Response).

The Notice indicates that (1) a complete listing of all of the claims is not present because the original claim set submitted on 8/23/2004 is considered to be the immediate prior version of the claims and (2) the supplemental response does not state if it replaces the remarks of the amendment dated 12/26/2006.

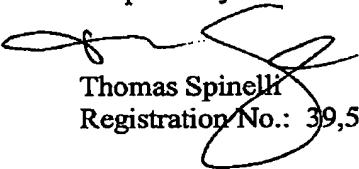
With regard to (1), Applicants cannot understand why the Examiner considers the original claim set to be the immediate prior version of the claims when the claims were amended by the amendment of December 26, 2006. Applicants respectfully submit that the claim set as amended in the response of December 26, 2006 is the immediate prior version of the claims at the time of the filing of the Supplemental Response. Since, the Official Action of August 25, 2006, was not a final rejection, the Examiner has no discretion as to whether the amendment of December 26, 2006 is to be entered and must enter the same as a matter of course. Therefore, Applicants submit that the claim amendments presented in the "Supplemental Response" only supplemented (as was clearly expressed therein) the claims

presented in the response of December 26, 2006 and correctly used such claims as the immediate prior version of the claims.

With regard to (2), the Supplemental Response clearly indicated that the same "supplemented" the previously filed response and the remarks therein were only addressed to the correction of errors in the previous claim amendments. No remarks were presented as to the objections and rejections from the official action of August 25, 2006. Thus, it was very clear that the remarks presented in the Supplemental Response only supplemented those in the previous response. The Supplemental Response did not state if it replaced the remarks of the amendment because it clearly stated otherwise, it only served to supplement the previous response.

In view of the above, Applicants request entry of both the Response submitted on December 26, 2006 and the Supplemental Response submitted on January 29, 2007 and consideration of the claims and remarks presented therein.

Respectfully submitted,


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